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# BUCC hosts Mother's Day flower sale



SEE MORE PHOTOS  
ON PAGE 5

The BUCC nearly sold out of its flowers at the annual Mother's Day flower sale last weekend.

**MELINA BOURDEAU**  
Staff writer

BELCHERTOWN – Whether for their mom, themselves or for others, there was a large turnout the Belchertown United Church of Christ hosted its annual flower sale last weekend.

The event serves as a fundraiser for the church. This year four young volunteers helped buyers and managed the cashbox.

Among the attendees were mother and daughter Sharon and Abigail Marean. Abigail Marean came to visit from Brooklyn, NY for their first Mother's Day since the pandemic. Abigail Marean bought a plant for her windowsill. "Last year we had a virtual Mother's Day, but this time we get to see and hug each other," Sharon Marean. "That's why it's important to be vaccinated."

Flowers for the sale were donated from Randall's Farm.



Daughter, Abigail Marean and her mother, Sharon Marean, attended the BUCC Mother's Day flower sale as part of a weekend together.

**BOARD OF HEALTH**

## BOH talk mask mandate signage

**LILY JUDA**  
Correspondent

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Board of Health approved new signage to replace current signs and discussed vaccine hesitancy at its recent meeting.

The board discussed interest in approving another round of COVID-19 signs to be made to display around town regarding recent mask-wearing guideline changes issued by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention at its recent meeting last week.

Signs enforcing mask-wearing remain on display throughout public areas in Belchertown, however will be taken down by the Department of Public Works employees throughout the spring.

Due to recent change in mask-wearing guidelines, the board discussed whether to approve a new round of signs to be printed, to accommodate these new guidelines.

These new signs would replace those posted in public areas such as businesses, the Belchertown common, playgrounds, the skatepark, library, post office, the dump or other areas as seen fit. Funding for these new signs would come from left-over money from the town's CARES Act

See **BOH**, page 7 •

**RAIL STUDY**

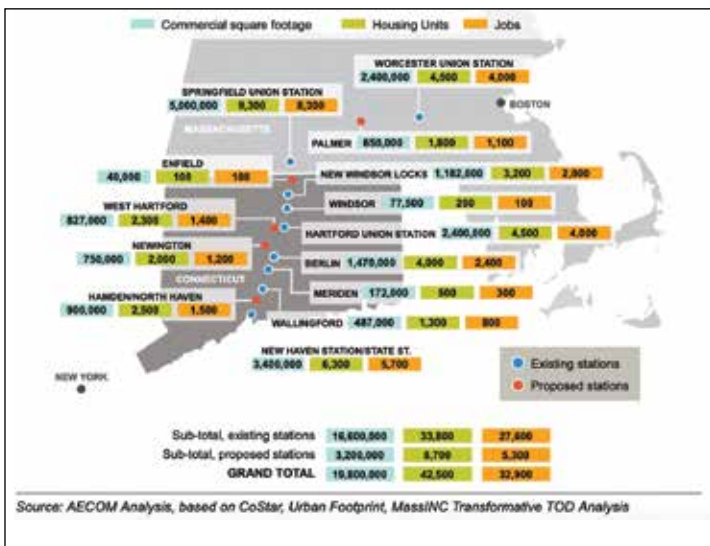
## Rail study celebrated by advocates for new area commuter line

**BY MICHAEL HARRISON**  
mharrison@turley.com

REGION — Advocates of a new commuter rail line connecting Western Mass. to Boston are cheering the release of a new Capitol Region Council of Governments report backing all the main arguments for public investment in the project.

"The study is great for Palmer," Ben Hood, chairman of the East-West Rail Steering Committee said.

"The inland route between Boston and New York City is the key to unlocking the enormous economic benefits and transit-oriented development that would accompany restored pas-



This graphic gives shows commercial square footage, housing units, and jobs for the existing and proposed passenger stations along this route.

**SELECTBOARD**

## DPW presents N. Main/Main St. project

**MELINA BOURDEAU**  
Staff writer

BELCHERTOWN – Department of Public Works Director Steve Williams presented "a very preliminary" set of plans for the proposed \$3 million Main St/North Main St reconstruction project to the Selectboard recently.

Williams estimates will be about two to three years in the future.

The project is the next phase of the roadway projects the DPW is planning, which Williams is striving to get federal and state funding for.

"As with any good state and federal program, the parameters change from project to project, and this is no different," said Williams.

The proposed project begins around North Main St and progresses toward the center of town.

"As it does, what we'll see on the east side of the roadway is a four-foot sidewalk non-conforming to standards," Williams said. "The requirements for the roadway cross-section are 11-foot travel lanes and an area for a shoulder which is the area between the white line and the curb. The new requirement from the federal government is a 10-foot multi-use path."

He said it is similar to Carriage Drive with a sidewalk and on the side of the road is a multi-use path. The difference between the path and sidewalk is that the path is adaptive for bicycle use.

Through public outreach on the

See **MAIN ST PROJECT**, page 12 •

See **RAIL**, page 14 •





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## COMMUNITY

# Belchertown town election Monday

**MELINA BOURDEAU**  
Staff writer

BELCHERTOWN – The Annual Town Election is on Monday, May 17 in the Belchertown High School Gymnasium from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. All COVID-19 precautions will be in place as they were in 2020. The entrance will be by the tennis courts.

There are two contested races in this year's election.

There are three people running for two available seats on the Selectboard. There are no incumbents.

Ronald Aponte, George "Archie" Archible and Nicholas Pucel are run-

ning for the positions, which have a three year-term.

There are four people running for two available seats on the School Committee.

Incumbent Ruby Bansal, Amy Lamothe, Sean Lavalley and Jonathan Ritter are running for the two seats. The position has a three-year term.

The remaining positions are uncontested.

Incumbent Judy O'Kulsy is running for reelection Housing Authority. The position has a five-year term.

Incumbent Colleen Duroshea is running for reelection for a position on the Board of Health. The position

has a three-year term.

Incumbent Daniel Beaudette is running for reelection for a position on the Planning Board. The position has a five-year term.

Running for the reelection on the Board Assessors is incumbent Donald Minney. The position has a three-year term.

Theresa Camerlin is running for Belchertown Town Clerk, which has a term of three years.

To see a sample ballot go to <https://cms2.revize.com/revize/belchertown/Sample%20Ballot%205-17-2021.pdf>.

Visit us at  
[www.turley.com](http://www.turley.com)

## Case numbers remain steady as vaccinations rise

**MELINA BOURDEAU**  
Staff writer

BELCHERTOWN – Belchertown saw 13 new cases of COVID-19 in the past weekly period, but the town is expected to see a downward trend, according to Quabbin Health Director Stephen Bell.

Bell continues to recommend people get vaccinated.

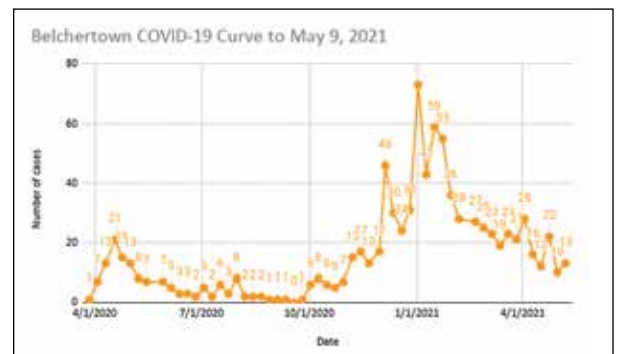
Currently, 37.6% of Belchertown residents are fully vaccinated and 53.7% have at least one dose of a vaccine.

"If you look at the state average, we're a little behind the state," Bell said. "We're doing relatively well as far as Hampshire County, which is 35.5% vaccinated and 52.7% of people have at least one dose."

He also noted there appears to be a drop in case numbers when at least 50% of a population receives a partial dose.

"We're seeing our cases starting to go down," Bell said. "There was a cluster last week, but we're on the down slide."

From Sunday, May 2 to Saturday, May 8,



there were 13 new cases, bringing the new cases to 897 total cases. There were no new deaths caused by COVID-19, leaving the total number of deaths caused by the novel coronavirus at 16.

There have been a total of 38,036 COVID-19 tests as of May 2, 1,007 tests during this weekly period.

The town remains in the yellow designation according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

The positivity rate from Sunday, May 2 to Saturday, May 8 is higher than the previous week going from .97% last week to 1.29%.

## PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT ELECT Stephen Anthony Chojnacki Granby Selectboard

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## Granby Town Election Monday

**MELINA BOURDEAU**  
Staff writer

GRANBY – Town Clerk Katherine Kelly-Regan has announced the candidates running in the upcoming annual town election on Monday, May 17.

The election will be held in the Granby Jr/Sr High School gymnasium, 385 East State St, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

This year there are three contested races – the Selectboard, Board of Assessors and the Planning Board.

There are two candidates for Selectboard, which is a three-year term. There are no incumbents for the position. Richard Beaulieu and Stephen Chojnacki are running for the seat.

There are two candidates for the Board of Assessors, which has a three-year term. There are no incumbents. James Healy and Dakota Richards are running for the open seat.

Running for a seat on the Housing Authority, which has a five-year term, is Donald Lindsay.

Running for Planning Board, which has a five-year term, are Nita Abbott and Dakota Richards.

The remaining races are uncontested.

Running for reelection to the Board of

Health, which has a three-year term, is Lee Lalonde. Lalonde is an incumbent.

Incumbent Lynn Snopek Mercier is running for reelection as the town moderator. The position has a three-year term.

Running for Town Collector is Nicole Menard. The position has a three-year term.

Incumbent Steven Nally is running for reelection as Town Treasurer. The position has a three-year term.

There are two people running for two seats on the School Committee. The seats have a three-year term. Incumbent Jennifer Bartosz and Jill Pelletier are running for the positions.

Incumbent Gordon Landry is seeking reelection as the Commissioner of Burial Grounds. The position has a three-year term.

Three people are running for three available seats as Library Trustees, which has a three-year term. Incumbents Janice Cook and Theresa Laprade as well as Denise Conti.

There is one vacancy for as a Library Trustee for an unexpired term.

To see a sample ballot, go to [https://www.granby-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyh-lif4466/f/events/may\\_17\\_2021.ate\\_.pdf](https://www.granby-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyh-lif4466/f/events/may_17_2021.ate_.pdf).

## Lions to host meatball grinder fundraiser

BELCHERTOWN – The Belchertown Lions Club will hold a drive-thru/pick-up Meatball Grinder sale on Saturday, May 22 from 12 to 5 p.m. on the grounds of the Belchertown United Church of Christ. The ticket is \$10 includes the sub, chips and bev-

erage...and there's no need to pre-order.

As always, all proceeds from the club's fundraising events go to charity...and this year in particular there will be several graduating seniors receiving \$1,500 Lions Club scholarships to help continue their education.



COMMUNITY

BCTV schedule

BELCHERTOWN – This is the upcoming schedule for Thursday, May 13 to Wednesday, May 19.

- Thursday, May 13**

  - 8 a.m. – Selectboard – May 10
  - 10 a.m. – Conservation Comm. – May 10
  - 12 p.m. – Planning Board – May 11
  - 7 p.m. – Selectboard – May 10
  - 9 p.m. – Conservation Comm. – May 10
  - 11 p.m. – Planning Board – May 11

**Friday, May 14**

  - 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
  - 9 a.m. – Candidates’ Night 2021
  - 10:30 a.m. – How to Vote
  - 7 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
  - 8 p.m. – Candidates’ Night 2021
  - 9:30 p.m. – How to Vote

**Saturday, May 15**

  - 8 a.m. – Curious Giraffe
  - 8:30 a.m. – Candidates’ Night 2021
  - 10 a.m. – How to Vote
  - 7 p.m. – Candidates’ Night 2021
  - 8:30 p.m. – How to Vote

**Sunday, May 16**

  - 4:30 p.m. – St. Francis Roman Catholic Church
  - 6 p.m. – Christ Community Church
  - 7 p.m. – Hope United Methodist Church
  - 8:30 p.m. – Candidates’ Night 2021
  - 10 p.m. – How to Vote

**Monday, May 17**

  - 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
  - 9 a.m. – Candidates’ Night 2021
  - 10:30 a.m. – How to Vote
  - 5 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman
  - 6 p.m. – Candidates Night 2021
  - 7:30 p.m. – How to Vote

**Tuesday, May 18**

  - 8 a.m. – Curious Giraffe

**Wednesday, May 19**

  - 8 a.m. – Conversation with Pakman
  - 1 p.m. – Meditation with Lori - Peace
  - 7 p.m. – Conversation with Pakman

The BCTV Studio is located at 68 State St., Belchertown. BCTV channels are 191, 192 and 193. The BCTV schedule is available at [www.Belchertown.org](http://www.Belchertown.org). On the main title page select “residents,” click on Belchertown Community Television. Selected BCTV shows are also available on Vimeo. Go to [www.Belchertown.org](http://www.Belchertown.org), go to quick links and click on “watch meetings and events online.” The schedule is subject to change.

The BCTV weather information system is broadcast on TV channel 193 and displays the current weather conditions at the BCTV station as well as, the current regional radar. This service operates 24 hours a day with audio provided by the National Weather Service from Albany New York, with forecasts, storm and emergency warnings for the Pioneer Valley.



Construction on Route 202 has resumed and is expected to be completed late this fall, according to DPW Director Steve Williams.

Rt. 202 construction has resumed

BELCHERTOWN – For those who drive it often, it’s hard to ignore construction that has recently resumed on Route 202 (Maple St. and State St.).

The State Street /Maple St. Roadway Improvement Project is 1.17 miles long and has a contract value of \$4.83 million, according to Department of Public Works Director Steve Williams.

The pre-construction condition of the corridor was poor; adequate transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities were deficient; and traffic congestion was severely affecting the vitality of businesses and standards of living for those residents in this area.

The completed project which is expected late this fall, will provide minor widening, pavement rehabilitation, drainage improvements, and signalization at the intersections of State St at Turkey Hill Road and State Street at Stadler St.

“I believe these measures are in line with community priorities, will greatly benefit the community and the region,” Williams said. “The reduced congestion and the improved safety for motorist, bicyclist, and pedestrians will support the existing residential and business development along the corridor.”

This project is also a critical part of the future development of the former Belchertown State School Campus which encompasses approximately 150 acres of new commercial property currently under planning by Mass Development and the Belchertown Economic Development Industrial Corporation, Williams said.

Join a drum circle at the Swift River Fields

BELCHERTOWN – There will be a community drum circle at the Swift River Fields in Belchertown on Wednesday, May 19 from 6 to 7 p.m.

There is a rain date Tuesday, May 25, 6 to 7 p.m.

Join the Community Drum Circle with Tim Kane.

Connect with others in a fun and relaxed atmosphere and a COVID-safe, socially-distant environment while we explore world beats and make music together. No experience necessary. The event great for all ages. Pre-registration required by texting 774-757-7636.

We’ll provide sanitized hand drums for up to 20 people. Personal drums are also welcome. Please bring a lawn chair. This program is supported in part by a grant from your town’s Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. [www.massculturalcouncil.org](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org)

Tim Kane is a member of the Drum Circle Facilitators Guild. Visit [www.kanedrums.com](http://www.kanedrums.com) to learn more.

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## FACES & PLACES

### ENGAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENT



Corey Zulkiewicz and Greg Kaye

COURTESY PHOTO

## Zulkiewicz, Kaye to wed

NEW YORK CITY, NY – Corey Zulkiewicz, of Belchertown, and Greg Kaye, Watching NJ, got engaged on April 24, 2021 in New York City.

The couple intend to get married summer of 2022 and met at Villanova University in 2014.

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COURTESY PHOTO

## BACKYARD VISITOR

Angela Bergeron-Alexander captured this backyard visitor on her squirrel feeder during the afternoon on Monday, May 3 on Federal St. in Belchertown.

## COA members invited to free virtual elder law program

BELCHERTOWN – Local seniors can learn about Elder Law issues at a free virtual event hosted by the Belchertown Council on Aging on Wednesday, May 19 at 6 p.m. The event is part of the statewide Elder Law Education Program presented by the Massachusetts Bar Association.

It corresponds with the publication of the revised and expanded “2021 Elder Law Education Guide,” which is available online at the MBA’s companion website, [www.MassLawHelp.com](http://www.MassLawHelp.com).

Among the topics discussed at virtual events throughout the commonwealth this year are Veteran Affairs Financial Benefits, how to protect your home and assets, power of attorney and health care proxies, reverse mortgages, Homestead, Life Estates and Tax Exemptions, Medicare/Medicaid changes, COVID-19 resources, and alternatives to nursing home care.

Attorney Coyle, from Bacon Wilson, P.C. will focus on basic estate planning documents and the benefits of having them in place i.e., last will and testament, health care proxy, power of attorney and HIPAA authorization. There will be time at the end of his presentation for questions and comments.

The Elder Law Education Program matches attorneys from the MBA and the Massachusetts Chapter of the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) with more than 50 councils on aging or senior centers throughout the state to make free presentations about the law.

Volunteer attorneys have participated in the Elder Law Education Program since 1987. Past topics have touched on the Homestead Act, estate planning and long-term health insurance.

The program is presented with the generous assistance and continued collaboration of the Massachusetts Chapter of NAELA.

For a Zoom invite to watch or listen in to the presentation being offered by Attorney Benjamin

Coyle, contact Katy at 323-0420 ext. 501 or [kmartin@belchertown.org](mailto:kmartin@belchertown.org).

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(Left to right) Volunteers 12 year olds Zoe Eyler-Pelletier, Olivia Eyler-Pelletier, Sean Lindsay and Cian Lindsay helped at the Mother's Day flower sale as part of their confirmations.

# Mother's Day

## PLANT SALE

PHOTOS BY MELINA BOURDEAU

BUCC held its annual Mother's Day flower sale last week, a fundraiser which helps the church.

# United Ways rise to the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic

NORTHAMPTON—United Ways work year-round to help people who are vulnerable, and in the past year, meeting increased needs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has made agencies across the world far busier and even more relevant.

United Way of Hampshire County regularly reports to United Way Worldwide, including its own efforts related to COVID. In meeting the needs of an additional, estimated 5,000 people in Hampshire County in the past year, the agency expanded its summer diaper drive into a year-long effort, rallied 300 volunteers for COVID-related tasks, and fielded 380% more calls for help via the 2-1-1 emergency line.

“United Way has always fought for the health, education and financial stability of every person in every community,” said John Bidwell, executive director of the Hampshire County agency. “In particular, that means we focus on the thorniest issues related to poverty and near poverty. Too many of our neighbors have to decide between diapers and food, or medicine or gas for our car. Things that most of us don’t think twice about. As the pandemic continues, so does our critical work helping the most vulnerable in these tough times.”

Bidwell said increased support for the agency would allow it to continue to provide a higher level of help. To make a donation, visit <https://www.uwhampshire.org/give>

### In the region

In a more typical year, United Way of Hampshire County provides support that touches roughly 20,000 lives. With the financial devastation wrought by COVID, the agency has reached an estimated 5,000 additional people, greatly ramping up the assistance it provides. It has:

- Responded to 4,930 calls for help to the 2-1-1 emergency line over the past year, up from 1,297 in 2019, with top needs reported as rent assistance and childcare.
- Expanded the summer diaper drive into a

year-long effort, increasing diaper donations by 250 percent and offering busy partner agencies relief in knowing they can relax their own diaper-gathering.

- Rallied roughly 300 volunteers for COVID-specific efforts, including preparing and running shelters, delivering food, and making hats and masks.

- Collected and dispersed a high volume of donated items for the homeless, including tents, jackets, hats, gloves, food, chairs, water bottles, hand-washing stations, hand sanitizer, and masks.

- Provided logistical and strategic support, such as in opening shelters in Amherst and Northampton as well as supporting a recovery center in Ware.

Each year, United Way of Hampshire County provides funding in three-year grant commitments to its partner agencies with direction that the funds must be spent in one of three specific categories: children, youth and families; economic security; and health and safety.

“We continue providing support to 35 programs across Hampshire County,” Bidwell said, adding, “This year, we have unrestricted funding, allowing the partners to use the funds in the ways they need during COVID. This flexibility has been critical for them in responding to increased needs.”

### Supporting justice, equity, diversity and inclusion

The COVID-19 crisis has corresponded with a rising awareness of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion—referred to as (JEDI) issues. As a result, United Way of Hampshire County created a standing JEDI committee, was involved with the crafting of several racial solidarity statements for nonprofits and has helped underwrite JEDI trainings for nonprofits through the Council of Service Agencies and Greater Northampton Chamber of Commerce.

To learn more, donate or volunteer, visit <https://www.uwhampshire.org/>.

Photo from Spring 2019

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OPINION

COMMENTS ON CONGRESS

Summing up democracy

LEE H. HAMILTON  
Guest columnist

It's so easy, in the course of our day-to-day lives, to get caught up in the political preoccupations of the moment. What's the Senate going to do about the filibuster? How should infrastructure money be spent? Is the country going to come out of this year as badly divided as it started? These and many other questions matter a lot, but sometimes, it's helpful to step back and take stock of what we've learned over the course of our history.

I've been thinking about this because I've been reading Jon Meacham's 2018 book, "The Soul of America: The Battle for Our Better Angels." In it, Meacham notes that we've been badly divided and knocked back on our heels in the past but have always managed to work our way through those difficulties. He cites a variety of writers and speakers, and a number of them have stuck with me because they're both reassuring and a challenge. They remind us that sustaining our democracy is hard work and that its vitality depends on each of us, not just to participate, but to make the effort to understand and talk to people we don't agree with, and to do our best to discern the facts on which all genuine progress relies. Here they are, with a couple I've added on my own that speak to the same issues:

"Do not expect to accomplish anything without an effort." Teddy Roosevelt said this in an 1883 speech called, "The Duties of American Citizenship."

"The first duty of an American citizen, then, is that he shall work in politics." This is Roosevelt again, in the same speech, making the point, in the language of the time, that being an American citizen means being willing to engage in the work of democracy.

"Speak up, show up and stand up." That's Georgia's Stacey Abrams laying out, in concise form, the basic challenges for anyone trying to affect the course of public life.

"Progress on this journey often comes in small increments." This is Meacham himself, with a reminder that progress comes slow and hard.

"Nowhere is the rule of public opinion so complete as in America, or so direct." This was Englishman James Bryce, writing in The American Commonwealth, which appeared in 1888.

"People are responsible for the government they get." Harry Truman summed up our core responsibility: we have to choose our political leaders wisely.

"It is not only important, but mentally invigorating to discuss political matters with people whose opinions differ radically from one's own." Eleanor Roosevelt wrote this in a book published when she was 76, "You Learn by Living: Eleven Keys for a More Fulfilling Life."

"The enemy of America is not our many Muslim friends. It is not our many Arab friends. Our enemy is a radical network of terrorists and every government that supports them." I include this remark by George W. Bush, in a speech he gave to a joint session of Congress following the 9/11 attacks, because it's a cogent reminder that keeping our eye on the target matters in public policy.

"The people have often made mistakes, but given time and the facts, they will make the corrections." This was Truman again. I like his confidence.

"America of the 21st century is, for all its shortcomings, freer and more accepting than it has ever been." Meacham makes it clear that our nation, despite its many stumbles, has moved toward progress, in no small part because the American people, as Truman suggests above, have set it on that course.

"It is in order that each one of you may have through this free government which we have enjoyed, an open field and a fair chance for your industry, enterprise and intelligence... The nation is worth fighting for, to secure such an inestimable jewel." Abraham Lincoln said this in 1864. His words remind us that safeguarding a freely chosen, democratically elected government that creates the conditions for each of us to succeed by dint of our efforts is what engaging in politics is all about.

Lee Hamilton is a senior advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar at the IU Hamilton Lugar School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice at the IU O'Neill School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.



LETTER

Promoting PROforestation

Dear Editor,

As sixth graders, we really care about the issue of climate change. We know that if it isn't resolved it will impact our futures and the futures of others. There's one part of climate change that we are most concerned about - deforestation. Deforestation is a big issue; it means cutting down trees. We are working to promote PROforestation. We've chosen two bills in the Massachusetts Legislature that we think can help us: H 1002 — An Act to Increase Protection of Wildlife Management Areas, and H 912 — An Act Relative to Forest Protection. If these bills are passed it will help reduce climate change and protect our forests and wildlife.

H 1002's goal is to protect 30% of forests administered by Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife by 2030. H 912 will make changes to out of date policies. If we protect forests and wildlife, Massachusetts will be doing our part to stop climate change. PROforestation will make Massachusetts a cleaner and more beautiful place. A lot of people in Massachusetts care about our wildlife and trees. For some people it's the reason they live here. Our class is already working very hard to pass these bills, and hope that members of the legislature co-sponsor them and prioritize their passage.

Sincerely,

Andrew Martineau  
and Macey Pariseau

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Will taking 401K distributions affect my Social Security benefit?

RUSSELL GLOOR  
Guest columnist

Dear Rusty: I'm 63 and retired from work, but not drawing Social Security. I have accumulated just over \$300,000 in my rollover 401K IRA. My wife is still working full time, so we have medical, dental and vision coverage. I have a few questions:

1) When I take IRA distributions throughout the year, do those dollar amounts get reported to Social Security as income?

2) If not, will my Social Security benefit change (will I be penalized?) for not working and having zero income as I continue to withdraw investments and show no income?

3) If my benefit will drop because of the last few years of no income, would it be advisable to start drawing Social Security now? Signed: Planning Ahead

Dear Planning Ahead: Whenever you decide to claim Social Security, they will compute your benefit amount from your lifetime earnings history. They will adjust your earnings for inflation in all years prior to the year you turned 60, find the 35 years in which you had the highest (inflation-adjusted) earnings, and use that "average indexed monthly earnings" (AIME) amount to determine your Primary Insurance Amount (PIA), which is your benefit entitlement at your full retirement age (FRA).

From there, your age when you claim determines your final Social Security payment amount. Born in 1958, your FRA is 66 plus 8 months, and that is the age at which you will get 100% of your PIA. If you claim benefits before your FRA, your payment will be reduced; and if you wait until after your FRA to claim, your benefit

will be increased. If you wait until you are 70 to claim, your Social Security payment will reach maximum (about 27% more than your FRA benefit amount). Now, to your specific questions:

1) Distributions taken from your 401k or IRA are not reported to Social Security as "earnings" and do not count toward your Social Security benefit entitlement.

2) If you have already retired from working, having zero earnings now won't further affect your final Social Security payment amount because your benefit will be based upon your 35 highest-earning years. However, if you have a recent benefit estimate from Social Security, that estimate assumed that you would continue to earn at the same level you most recently reported to the IRS until you reached your FRA. So, if you got the estimate while you were still working (or shortly thereafter), the estimate is higher than your actual benefit will be. If you received the estimate a year or more after you stopped working, the estimate is more accurate. In any case, your 401K withdrawals will not count as Social Security earnings.

3) Claiming now would result in a permanently reduced Social Security benefit amount because you haven't yet reached your full retirement age. But claiming now wouldn't be a hedge against your current lack of earnings, because your benefit will be based upon the highest earning 35 years over your lifetime.

If you don't already have a full 35 years of Social Security-covered earnings they will still use 35 years in the benefit calculation, adding \$0 earnings for enough years to make it 35. If that is the case, you could offset some of those zero years in

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Belchertown, Granby & Amherst  
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# If it didn't grow there, don't throw it there!

**JULIE MIDURA**  
Correspondent

*The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that someone else will save it.* — Robert Swan

Now that spring has arrived and more and more people are flooding to the wilderness to enjoy some much needed outdoor therapy, I would like to talk about one of the seven principles of Leave No Trace. Otherwise known as LNT, Leave No Trace is a set of principles designed to educate visitors to the outdoors on how to leave as minimal impact as possible on the land.

Although there are seven principles of LNT, this column will focus on the one that I believe is the most widely violated: "Dispose of Waste Properly." This is otherwise known as "Carry in- Carry Out," or simply "Don't litter."

You remember. It's what our mothers taught us when we were about five years old.

Tom and I hiked 10 miles of trails last weekend at the 1,200-acre Facing Rock Wilderness Area in our hometown of Ludlow, and we hauled out 19 pounds of trash. We picked up everything from beer cans, water bottles, and assorted wrappers to old buckets, scrap metal, and car parts. We still have miles and miles of trails to cover, and we plan to clean up every single one.



Julie with just some of the trash she and Tom collected in the Facing Rock Wilderness Area in Ludlow. The couple has many more miles of trails they plan to police.

Why? Because trash and litter in our outdoor spaces is unacceptable. We are blessed to have a beautiful wilderness area here in Ludlow and it is our responsibility to keep it wild. The assortment of garbage on the trails not only detracts from the naturalness of an area, but can be extremely detrimental to the animals who live there and to the ecosystem itself.

If you spend time outside in nature, I urge you to research how long it takes for various items to break down in nature.

No, seriously... you can do it now. I'll wait.

Crazy, right?!

I thought the same thing when I researched it! Two YEARS for a banana peel to decompose. Over three years for a pistachio shell. Up to 200 years for an aluminum can, and 450 years for a water bottle! I don't know about you, but the thought that my great-great-grandchildren will be looking at the same garbage that I'm looking at while enjoying time in the wilderness is not something that I can accept. And it makes no difference whether the garbage is "organic" or "artificial" — trash is trash, and it doesn't belong in our sacred outdoor spaces.

I believe that it's our responsibility to treat the wilderness the same way we treat our own homes. In all seriousness, when we're at home and we finish eating an orange or drinking a beer, do we throw the

peel or the can on the floor in our kitchens? Do we drop the empty potato chip bag on our lawn and leave it there after we have a barbecue in our backyard? Of course not.

Then why do we think it's acceptable to do it when we're in the woods?

When Tom and I see empty cans and bottles when we're hiking, we shake our heads in disbelief. We just can't understand how someone had the energy to carry it into the woods when it was full and weighed almost a pound, yet lacked the stamina to carry it back out once it was empty and weighed less than an ounce.

I ask each of you to please join Tom and I in our efforts to help clean up our outdoor spaces this spring by:

Carrying gloves and a plastic bag for the trash that you find while you're spending time outdoors.

Organizing a cleanup day at your local trail.

Sharing your knowledge about LNT with those around you, especially with your children.

We all need to be part of the solution.

We owe it to each other.

We owe it to those who will come after us.

And, we owe it to the natural places that many of us call home.

Peace, and hike on, friends!

Follow our hiking adventures on Instagram @morethanthemountain.

## BOH • from page 1

funding. This left-over funding would allot approximately 50 new signs for the town, according to Board of Health member Hope Guardianier.

"I think the signs would be very simple and encourage mask wearing in public places," Guardianier said.

This mask encouragement signage differs from the previous signs, which enforced mask wearing.

Board member, Ken Elstien said, "Even the majority of people in town who are vaccinated, should be wearing masks. This should be a piece of information on the sign to protect yourself and others."

Board of Health Chair Leanne Connolly said she felt strongly about keeping some signage in place.

"The biggest problem is vaccine-hesitancy, and I would think if we were going to put signs up, it would encourage people to get vaccinated," she said.

The board passed a motion to purchase new signs which will be posted in town to replace the old ones, enforcing mas wearing. Details on what will be on these signs will be determined at a later date.

### Vaccine Hesitancy

The board also discussed how to address the issue of vaccine hesitancy that Belchertown has been facing. Following its discussion, the matter will be placed on the board's June agenda.

Since the COVID-19 vaccine has become

available to all age ranges 16 and older, the highest rates of vaccinations in Belchertown have been seen in the older populations, according the Quabbin Health District Director Stephen Bell. The age range of 75 and up is 79% fully vaccinated and age 65 to 74 being 71% fully vaccinated. The lowest rates of vaccinations are seen in teens and young adults, with ages zero through 19 being 3% fully vaccinated and age 20 to 29 being 22% vaccinated.

The largest population in Belchertown that remains unvaccinated is white, male residents. The board discussed how they can attempt to reach this population, in a way to hopefully increase the rate of vaccinations.

"For some people [getting vaccinated] is a problem with access, and they're on the fence if it's difficult to get to," Bell said. "I think in Belchertown, the demographic is white men not being interested or being on the fence. So, I think any kind of education campaign or any kind of targeted advertisement would be good."

"We also want to reach people who are not engaged," said Elstien.

Members suggested the possibility of inviting "influencers" to talk about why they got vaccinated and airing it on BCTV, writing a letter to the editor or publishing an ad to the Belchertown Sentinel is also suggested, along with the possibility of making a TikTok video.

The board will be taking more time within the next month to determine what method will have the largest reach and best impact when trying to encourage these populations to get vaccinated.



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**- 3 TERMS -**

**BELCHERTOWN SELECTMAN**

**- 9 YEARS -**

PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT ARCHIE ARCHIBLE FOR SELECTMAN



EDUCATION

Belchertown schools menu

Breakfast and lunch are free for all students all year.

Cold Spring School

Monday, May 17: Breakfast – sweet potato swirl roll and fruit.  
Lunch – munchie basket (mozzarella sticks, nuggets, tater tots with dipping sauces) and a dinner roll.  
Alternate – pretzels with a cheese stick.  
Tuesday, May 18: Breakfast – muffin and fruit  
Lunch – deli grinders (turkey and ham with cheese) lettuce, tomato, pickles and chips.  
Alternate – cheese sandwich.  
Wednesday, May 19: Breakfast – cereal and 100% juice.  
Lunch – warm pretzel with a cheese stick, steamed carrots and sidekicks fruit smoothie.  
Alternate – mini pancakes and a string cheese stick.  
Thursday, May 20: Breakfast – bagel with cream cheese.  
Lunch – mozzarella sticks with marinara dipping sauce, Caesar salad and a rice krispie treat.  
Alternate – ham sandwich.  
Friday, May 21: Breakfast – banana bread and fruit.  
Lunch – fish sticks with goldfish, roasted chickpeas and raw broccoli with ranch dip.  
Alternate – cereal meal with yogurt.

Swift River School

Monday, May 17: Lunch – munchie basket (mozzarella sticks, nuggets, tater tots with dipping sauces) and a dinner roll.  
Alternate – sunbutter and jelly  
Tuesday, May 18: Lunch – deli grinders (turkey and ham with cheese) lettuce, tomato, pickles and chips.  
Alternate – tuna wrap.  
Wednesday, May 19: Lunch – BBQ chicken, fries, steamed carrots and a sidekicks fruit smoothie.  
Thursday, May 20: Lunch – Mozzarella sticks with marinara dipping sauce, Caesar salad and a rice krispie treat.  
Alternate – ham sandwich  
Friday, May 21: Lunch – fish sticks, goldfish, roasted chickpeas, raw broccoli with ranch dip.  
Alternate – cereal meal with yogurt.

Chestnut Hill Community School

Monday, May 17: Lunch – munchie basket (mozzarella sticks, nuggets, tater tots with dipping sauces) and a dinner roll.  
Alternate – sunbutter and jelly  
Tuesday, May 18: Lunch – deli grinders (turkey and ham with cheese) lettuce, tomato, pickles and chips.  
Alternate – tuna wrap.  
Wednesday, May 19: Lunch – BBQ chicken, fries, steamed carrots and a sidekicks fruit smoothie.  
Thursday, May 20: Lunch – Mozzarella sticks with marinara dipping sauce, Caesar salad and a rice krispie treat.  
Alternate – ham sandwich  
Friday, May 21: Lunch – fish sticks, goldfish, roasted chickpeas, raw broccoli with ranch dip.  
Alternate – cereal meal with yogurt.

Jabish Brook Middle School

Monday, May 17: Lunch – munchie basket (mozzarella sticks, nuggets, tater tots with dipping sauces), a dinner roll and pudding with whipped topping.  
Tuesday, May 18: Lunch – loaded baked potato, steamed broccoli and a breadstick.  
Wednesday, May 19: Lunch – BBQ chicken, potato salad, peas and peach cake.  
Thursday, May 20: Lunch – mozzarella sticks, dipping sauce, Caesar salad and rice krispie treat.  
Friday, May 21: Lunch – fish sticks, oven fries, roast chickpeas and raw broccoli with ranch dip.

Belchertown High School

Monday, May 17: Breakfast – BHS breakfast rack.  
Lunch – munchie basket (mozzarella sticks, nuggets, tater tots with dipping sauces) and dinner roll.  
Tuesday, May 18: Breakfast – BHS breakfast rack.  
Lunch – loaded baked potato, steamed broccoli and a breadstick.  
Wednesday, May 19: BHS remote learning day, no in school meals.  
Thursday, May 20: Breakfast – BHS breakfast rack  
Lunch – mozzarella sticks with marinara dipping sauce, Caesar salad and rice krispie treat.  
Friday, May 21: Breakfast – BHS breakfast rack.  
Lunch – fish sticks, oven fries, roasted chickpeas and raw broccoli with ranch dip.

College NOTES

**Local student to receive doctorate from UMass Amherst**  
AMHERST – Katelyn Donoghue, daughter of Christopher and Carole Donoghue is set to graduate from UMass Amherst. Donoghue is a 2013 graduate of Belchertown High School, 2017 graduate of Elms College (Magna cum laude), will be accepting her doctorate from UMass Amherst on May 13. Donoghue is graduating Magna Cum Laude. Following graduation she will begin her career as an Audiologist at Clarke Center for Hearing.

**Keeley Firinne inducted into the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi**  
BATON ROUGE, LA – Keeley Firinne of Amherst, was recently initiated into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation’s oldest and most selective all-discipline collegiate honor society. Firinne was initiated at Ithaca College.  
Firinne is among approximately 30,000 students, faculty, professional staff and alumni to be initiated into Phi Kappa Phi each year. Membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter. Only the top 10 percent of seniors and 7.5 percent of juniors are eligible for membership. Graduate students in the top 10 percent of the number of candidates for graduate degrees may also qualify, as do faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction.

**Amherst student Tevah Rose started college early**  
GREAT BARRINGTON – It’s not every day that students start college early, but this Amherst, MA resident is no ordinary student. This year, Tevah Rose joined the spring 2021 class at Bard College at Simon’s Rock in Great Barrington. Replicating the success of the fall 2020 semester, this spring, Simon’s Rock continues to provide a safe, in-person learning environment.  
Rose’s academic and personal achievements stood out, securing Rose a spot at Simon’s Rock this spring. The college is home to about 400 students who engage in a rigorous liberal arts and sciences curriculum and graduate from college one or two years ahead of their peers.

**Local students named to the Dean’s List at MCPHS University**  
BOSTON – MCPHS University is pleased to announce the students who have been named to the Dean’s List for the Fall 2020 semester:  
• Christina Pellerin is a native of Amherst and is pursuing a Doctor of Pharmacy. Christina will graduate from the Worcester, Massachusetts campus in 2022.  
• Angela Martoccia Grabazs is a native of Belchertown and is pursuing a Doctor of Pharmacy. Angela will graduate from the Boston, Massachusetts campus in 2022.  
• Thy Ton-Morrison is a native of Granby and is pursuing a Doctor of Pharmacy. Thy will graduate from the Boston, Massachusetts campus in 2022.  
The Dean’s List recognizes those students with a full-time course load who have achieved outstanding scholarship with a 3.5 GPA or higher for the academic term.  
The mission of MCPHS University is to prepare graduates to advance health and serve communities worldwide through excellence, innovation, and collaboration in teaching, practice, scholarship, and research.

**Jessica Ha of Belchertown to graduate from University Honors Program at Nebraska**  
LINCOLN, NE - Jessica Ha of Belchertown is among 190 University of Nebraska-Lincoln graduating seniors who have completed the requirements to graduate from the University Honors Program in May. Ha will graduate from the College of Business.  
To graduate from the Honors Program, students must maintain at least a 3.5 grade-point average, complete a culminating senior project or research thesis, and fulfill other curricular requirements. This is the largest class of graduating honors students in the program’s 34-year history.

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401K • from page 6

your lifetime history by returning to work now, thus increasing your benefit when you claim. If you already have at least 35 years of earnings, enjoy your retirement!

One last thing to consider: if you predecease your wife, at her FRA she will be entitled to 100% of the benefit you were receiving at your death (if

that is more than her own). In other words, when you claim your benefit will affect the amount your wife can get as your widow. The longer you wait to claim, the higher your wife’s survivor benefit from you will be.

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Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET PRESENTATION  
PUBLIC HEARING

The Belchertown School Committee will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday May 25, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., to present the FY 2022 School Department Budget. Per Governor Baker’s order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20, the public will not be allowed to physically access this Budget Hearing. Members of the Public can access the meeting via live stream. Link will be located at www.belchertownps.com under the School Committee link at the top of the page beside the Agenda for this meeting.

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EDUCATION

# Students get ivy league writer’s workshop

BELCHERTOWN – Writers never settle for the first version of their work, according to writer, educator and scholar Paula Szulc, Ed.D.

Dr. Szulc, a Western Massachusetts native and Harvard University graduate, shared her perspective in a writer’s workshop with fifth graders at Chestnut Hill Community School last week.

Even before Dr. Szulc’s virtual visit, the fifth graders applied that knowledge as they wrote, edited and revised their own stories, Murray wrote in a press release. Excerpts from these stories became discussion points as students debated how their writing evolved from one version to the next.

“When students take a step back to critically examine their writing, they see themselves as authors and understand the necessary struggles all authors confront,” Dr. Szulc said.

The trio of Chestnut Hill teachers who organized the workshop agreed.

“One of the biggest frustrations

students share is the fact that they have to edit and resubmit. They learn that strong writers are also strong editors,” said teacher Laurie Murray.

“Bringing in a writer and hearing that adult describe their own difficulties sends the message that it is ok to need a second, third, and even fourth version before a written work is finished,” said fifth grade teacher Shelley Eldridge.

“Students who master writing skills become successful in any discipline they pursue. To me, this is the most important reason we include writer’s workshops in our approach to teaching,” Laura Anderman said.

Dr. Szulc concluded the workshop with a brief a description of the novel she is finishing, a work of historical fiction for adult readers, loosely based on events taking place at Belchertown State School in the 1970s. Chestnut Hill Community School is built on land formerly occupied by the state school.



COURTESY PHOTO  
Guest speaker, Harvard University graduate, author and Western Mass native Dr. Paula Szulc spoke to fifth graders about their writing processes at Chestnut Hill Community School last week.

# Walk-ins (and fly-ins) welcome.

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# Chicopee's regional vaccine site a reality

**DALTON ZBIERSKI**  
Staff Writer

CHICOPEE – Four neighboring communities celebrated together on April 28, as a regional vaccination site began operating out of the Castle of Knights in Chicopee on Memorial Drive. The opening served as a tremendous accomplishment for all involved.

The clinic will administer state-allotted doses of the Moderna vaccine to residents from Chicopee, Granby, Holyoke and South Hadley and has the capacity to administer 800 shots a day.

After several weeks of discussions, the Department of Public Health approved the regional vaccination site at the Castle of Knights in late March.

Doses, however, were slow to follow. The operation remained uncertain until an opening date was announced in mid-April.

South Hadley Emergency Management/Health Director Sharon Hart was on-hand to witness the opening on April 28; she commended the teamwork that led to the establishment of the regional clinic.

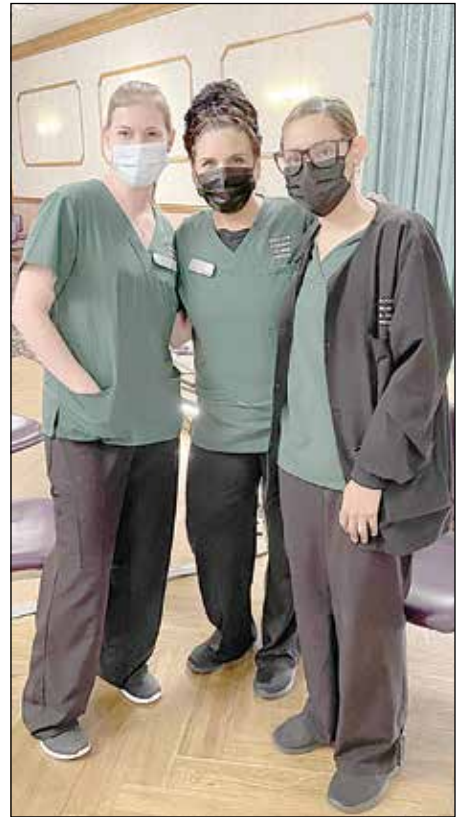
"This is amazing; the efforts they've put in to put this clinic together. Not only their efforts; they reached out to their neighbors, and it's a collaborative effort. They're our neighbors; they opened their arms, and we're rolling up our sleeves," said Hart.

Weeks of waiting culminated in the April 28 opening, which drove Chicopee Health Director Lisa Sanders to tears.

"I'm so excited today. I'm used to being at this podium and telling you guys all the active cases we have, but it's so good to



Holyoke Community College nursing students Shauna Martinez, Matthew Tetreault, Veronica Machuca, Edward Brewer prepare for the first day of the regional vaccination clinic that is operating at the Castle of Knights in Chicopee.



Holyoke Community College nursing students Brittany Lord, Christine Briggs and Yamaira Bejesus came out to work the first day of the Chicopee regional vaccination clinic.

PHOTOS BY DALTON ZBIERSKI

finally tell you that we have vaccines in the city. It's been so long, and I'm just so happy. Let's fill up these slots and let's just

crush COVID," said Sanders.

Chicopee Mayor John Vieau urged residents to get vaccinated and credited the first responders and medical professionals, who make the clinic possible.

Referencing the rising availability of COVID-19 testing and vaccines, Vieau expressed his belief that the state is making strong progress. Last Thursday, he emphasized the magnitude of the clinic's opening.

"I have some scripted things that I'm not going to use; it's not about being scripted today. It's about getting the message out there. We've made vaccines available, and that was our goal," said Vieau.

A number of speakers took to the podium at the Castle of the Knights on April 28.

Among them was Hampden County Sheriff Nick Cocchi, who praised all involved in manning the clinic.

"The heroes that are in this room today are not behind the podium. They're out in front of the podium. I want to thank each and every one of you for stepping up and doing the work that you do," said Cocchi.

Cocchi acknowledged that vaccinations are controversial. Nonetheless, he encouraged residents to book an appointment, even if only for peace of mind.

"One vaccine at a time will allow us to open up this Commonwealth and, then, that person, that family or that individual can feel confident about moving forward and doing so in a very safe and productive way," said Cocchi.

Interim Holyoke Mayor Terence Murphy took to the microphone as well, thanking the students from Holyoke Community College's nursing program, who are working the clinic. Murphy also delivered an important message to employers throughout the region.

"Without mandating, I would like to challenge employers to give your employees, especially those that are on low wages and can't afford to give up a couple of hours in order to get vaccinated; to give them those hours with pay, which in the long run will make your business more successful and will allow the community to get together," said Murphy.

One can schedule an appointment at the regional vaccination site by visiting [Mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine](https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine).

Dalton Zbierski is a staff writer, who can be reached at [dzbierski@turley.com](mailto:dzbierski@turley.com).



Lisa Sanders, Chicopee's Health Director, was moved to tears during the opening of the regional vaccination site in the city.

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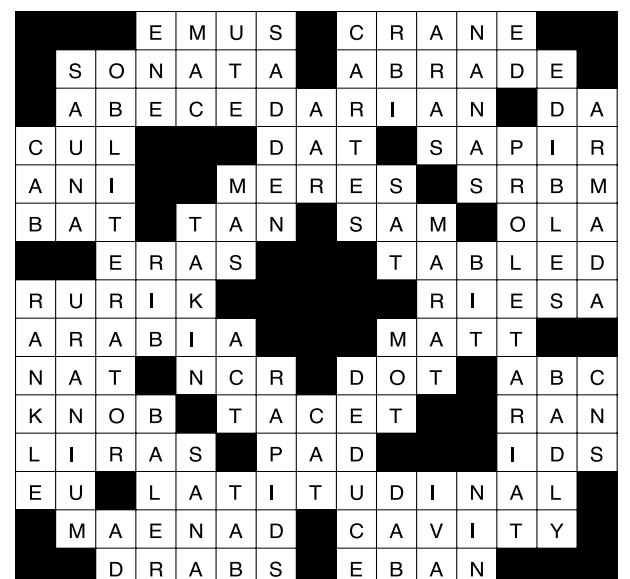
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## Upriver Journey



COURTESY PHOTO

Learn about the annual fish migration through a virtual program by Northfield Mountain.

**VIRTUAL** – Learn about the fascinating lives and epic migrations of American Shad and Sea Lamprey virtually with Firstlight's Northfield Mountain on May 18 from 5:30 until 6:30 p.m.

These fish play an important role in our river ecosystems as they migrate to and from the sea. Author John McPhee nicknamed American Shad "Our Founding Fish." Sea Lamprey have been called "Hero of our rivers and vampire of the sea." Find out why this keystone species

is misunderstood and underappreciated. Join Kim Noyes, Firstlight's Northfield Mountain Education Coordinator, for this free presentation on the history and natural history of these unusual fish as this spring's upriver migration is underway. This online event is co-sponsored with the Northfield Bird Club.

To register, go to [www.bookeo.com/northfield](http://www.bookeo.com/northfield). Registration requests must be received at least 24 hours before program begins.

## UMass to host virtual concert by vocal ensemble La Compagnia del Madrigale

**AMHERST**– On Saturday, May 15, the UMass Amherst Department of Music and Dance will host a virtual concert by La Compagnia del Madrigale, one of the world's foremost madrigal ensembles. The concert, titled "Tasso at Ferrara," will take place on the department's YouTube channel at 2 p.m., and is free and open to the public. The concert was originally scheduled to take place in April 2020 as part of the Tasso and Music Festival, but was postponed due to the pandemic.

The music on the program highlights the work of late-Renaissance composers associated with the court of Ferrara, Italy, where the great Italian poet Torquato Tasso (1544-1595) spent much of his career. The music has been made available through the Tasso in Music Project led by Professor of Music History Emiliano Ricciardi. Funded by a \$260,000 Scholarly Editions and Translations Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Tasso in Music Project established the first complete critical edition of the early

modern musical settings of the poetry of Torquato Tasso. The project has recently received Honorable Mention for the Digital Innovation Prize of the Renaissance Society of America.

At the May 15 concert, La Compagnia del Madrigale will present musical settings of Tasso's Rime and Gerusalemme liberata by some of the most prominent composers associated with the court of Ferrara, including Agostini, Gesualdo, Luzzaschi, Virchi, and Wert. The ensemble, which consists of sopranos Rossana Bertini and Francesca Cassinari; contralto Elena Carzaniga; tenors Giuseppe Maletto and Raffaele Giordani, and bass Matteo Bellotto, is widely viewed as one of the preeminent interpreters of Italian madrigal music performing today. Their recordings, published by Glossa, have received numerous awards, including the prestigious Gramophone Editor's Choice and the Diapason d'Or. More information about the ensemble may be found at <http://www.lacompaniadelmadrigale.com/en/home-en/>.



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DEATH NOTICE

John Matthew Riedel  
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OBITUARY

John Riedel

AMHERST – John Matthew (“Jack”) Riedel passed away peacefully at home in Amherst on May 1, 2021 following a brief illness.

Born May 27, 1960, Jack faced the challenges of Down Syndrome and learned to apply his capabilities and talents productively. Jack lived his formative years with his family in Belchertown and later moved to an apartment in Amherst center where he savored his independence and over the course of 30 plus years became a beloved fixture of the community as a result of his friendliness, gentleness, kindness, and humor.

Jack was aided in life with several strong advocates including Dr. Bern Graney, who was instrumental in Jack’s development and lifestyle, and the staff at Community Options. Jason, his long-time friend and with assistance from Pathlight, provided support which was irreplaceable. With help from Community Options, Jack developed photography skills and sold a number of items that expressed his artistic flair. He also enjoyed music, singing in the choir at Hope Church, slap-stick comedy, and particular serial dramas on TV. A graduate of Pathfinder Regional High School, Jack’s employment included positions at Price Chopper, UMass, and the Holiday Inn.

Jack is predeceased by his mother Mildred S Riedel, father Robert W Riedel, and brother Stuart A Riedel. He is survived by his brother Bill Riedel of North Andover, his wife Lisa and by two nephews and a niece.

A celebration of life will be scheduled; details available by contacting billried@gmail.com.

Beers & Story Belchertown Funeral Home has been entrusted with the arrangements and please visit www.beersandstory.com



The Hartsbrook School CSA  
expands available shares

HADLEY — As the coronavirus pandemic continues to shut down many local activities, families can safely spend time outdoors, cultivating crops in backyard gardens, thanks to lessons taught at The Hartsbrook School’s working farm. Students and families there nurture and tend crops as a safe, distanced outdoor activity that helps feed families, with benefit for others in surrounding communities.

In its second year, the Hartsbrook School CSA is selling 45 shares this season, providing weekly boxes of fresh produce grown and tended by students in the preK through 12 school whose 54 acres are part of a dynamic, hands-on, land-based curriculum. Shares are open to the public for purchase; as well, a lot of what is grown on the Hartsbrook farm goes to local organizations dedicated to eliminating food insecurity, Gardening the Community Abundance Farm and Grey Barn.

This year’s crops include kale, beans, beets, chard, broccoli, cabbage, onions, potatoes, leeks, carrots, squash, cucumbers, peppers, tomatoes, herbs and flowers. The school’s Land Stewardship Director Nicki Robb spoke about how local families can incorporate some of the growing lessons taught to Hartsbrook students to cultivate their own gardens, creating safe, productive activities during this complicated time.

“We are blessed with this amazing resource of land, and we decided to grow food in an accessible way for not only our own school community but for the wider community,” says Nicki Robb, land stewardship director. “We offered our first CSA last year, distributing to our community of shareholders, but the large bulk of the produce was shared with Gardening the Community in Springfield and Abundance Farm in Northampton. It is a relationship.”

Six acres of the school’s land is devoted to growing crops for the CSA. One-third of that goes to shareholders, and the rest is

distributed to food insecurity organizations for families in need, Robb says.

Hartsbrook’s Agricultural Arts curriculum begins in second grade and continues through high school. Every year includes a component of animal husbandry and gardening. As an example, third-graders grow a three sisters garden (corn, beans, and squash), tying into that grade’s core themes for the year and also to indigenous practices in the valley as they learn how to sustainably work the land. When students grow grains, they learn the process from sowing seeds to harvesting and baking bread. By high school, students are learning about the human impact on sustainability and climate consciousness.

It is inherently healing for children to “experience a real empathic relationship with the natural world, through activity and a sense of responsibility,” Robb said. They not only learn where their food and clothing come from; they graduate from the high school informed and aware, able to make choices with a sense of how their actions impact the rest of the world.

Local families can adopt some of these lessons by watching a series of instructional videos about how to start a family garden. Hartsbrook offers compost to the wider community to aid in home growing projects.

Vimeo links to help families start gardens: Planting Seeds, Turning Your Garden and Compost for All

The Hartsbrook School and farm has been a leader in the independent school movement of the Pioneer Valley for more than 40 years. Driven by a land-based Waldorf curriculum on its 54-acre campus, Hartsbrook educates students from preK through high school. The pedagogy provides for hands-on, experiential learning at the proper developmental stage for every child.



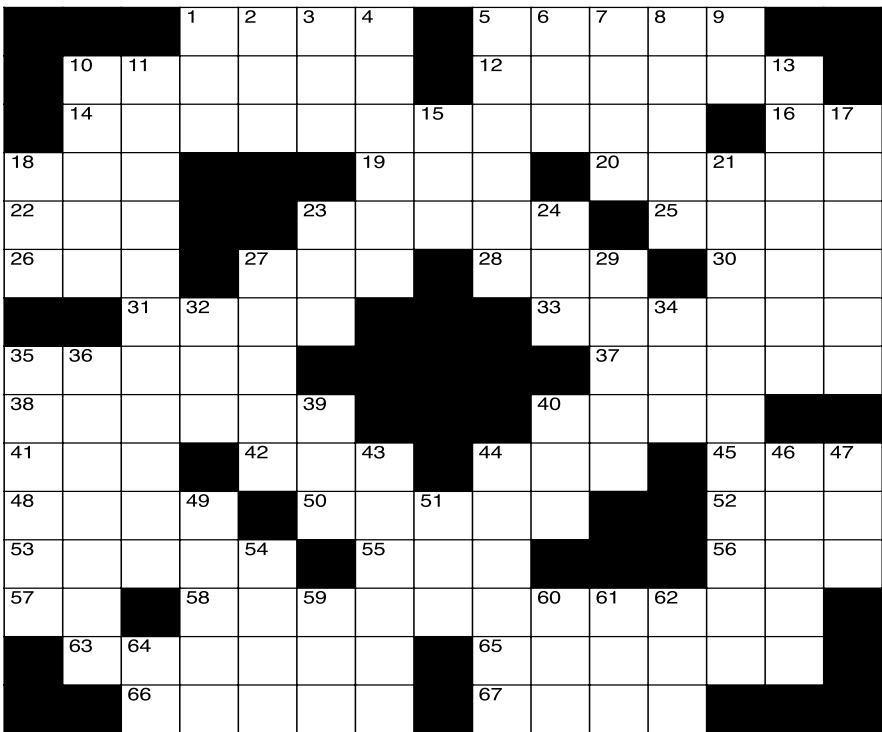
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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Large, flightless birds
- 5. Lifts and moves heavy objects
- 10. Hyundai sedan
- 12. Wear away by erosion
- 14. Arranged alphabetically
- 16. Top prosecutor
- 18. \_\_\_-de-sac: Short dead-end street
- 19. Digital audiotape
- 20. Linguistics pioneer
- 22. Singer DiFranco
- 23. Arms of the sea
- 25. Near-reach weapon (abbr.)
- 26. Ballplayer's accessory
- 27. You get one at the beach
- 28. U.S. founding father
- 30. W. Australia indigenous people
- 31. Amounts of time
- 33. Put on the shelf

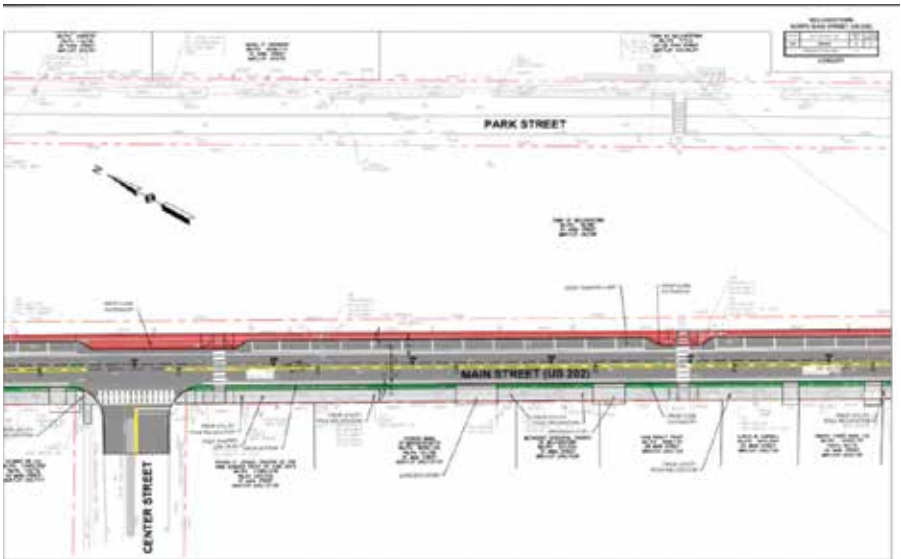
- 35. Russian dynasty member
- 37. City along the Elbe River
- 38. A peninsula between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf
- 40. Actor Damon
- 41. \_\_\_ King Cole, musician
- 42. Company that rings receipts
- 44. Scatter
- 45. Basics
- 48. Part of a door
- 50. Indicates silence
- 52. Moved quickly on foot
- 53. Monetary units
- 55. A place to crash
- 56. Many subconsciouses
- 57. Group of countries
- 58. About line of latitude
- 63. Female follower of Bacchus
- 65. A dentist can treat it
- 66. Dull brown fabrics

- 67. Int'l nonprofit

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Midway between northeast and east
- 2. Partner to cheese
- 3. One from Utah
- 4. A way to move
- 5. Playing cards
- 6. Baseball stat
- 7. Long river in western Asia
- 8. Grandmothers
- 9. Entertainment legend Sullivan
- 10. Steam bath room
- 11. One who kills
- 13. Food
- 15. Swiss river
- 17. Fleet
- 18. Taxi
- 21. Working class
- 23. More (Spanish)
- 24. High schoolers' test
- 27. Large heavily built

- goat antelope
- 29. Murdered in his bathtub
- 32. Tease good-naturedly
- 34. Morsel
- 35. Cause persistent resentment
- 36. A radioactive element
- 39. Perform in a play
- 40. Witty remark: Bon \_\_\_
- 43. A great place to kayak
- 44. Conclude by reasoning
- 46. In an unfavorable way
- 47. Complex of nerve tissues (abbr.)
- 49. Machine for making paper
- 51. Feline
- 54. Yugo's hatchback
- 59. Check
- 60. Press against lightly
- 61. Wind-pollinated plants
- 62. \_\_\_compoop
- 64. Commercial



COURTESY IMAGE

Department of Public Works Director Steve Williams presented preliminary plans for redesigning North Main and Main St.

MAIN ST PROJECT • from page 1

needs of the town, feedback was given on pedestrians and bicycle use which was built into the design.

The biggest variation is toward the center of town, Williams said.

Toward the intersections of Jackson St and East Walnut St there will be sidewalks on both sides of the Common, which Williams is proposing using stamped concrete on the side of the Common.

“Some of the big changes are narrowing east Walnut St (brought the corners of the intersection out) because that makes pedestrian crossing safer,” he said. “We added a bump out on the (side of the Common) to shorten the distance (to cross to the other side of Main St).”

There are proposed parking spaces along the east side of Main St, adding a bump out to have a crosswalk from one side of Main St to the Common.

“We worked hard to minimize infringement on the green space,” he said.

Williams explained what the next steps were for the town.

“These plans and our support for the project are going to be submitted to (Massachusetts Department of

Transportation) sometime over the summer. They have a project review committee that will look at it to determine if its eligible for the program. If that happens, they issue the town a project number and we can begin the process of finalizing the designs,” he said.

MassDOT would issue permitting and funding for the project. Generally, 75% of the funding comes from the federal government and 25% comes from the state.

“These are good investments for our limited engineering funds we currently use,” he said.

Selectboard member Jen Turner asked if diagonal parking was considered along the Common rather than parallel parking.

“We’d be infringing into the Common if we did diagonal style parking,” Williams said.

Selectboard member Jim Barry said he wanted to remind the public the large scale, expensive projects requires the continued maintenance in order to the town get into the “line.”

The next steps for the project will include submitted the plans to MassDOT, once authorized to get to the 25% design plan, a public hearing will be scheduled.

Williams said the plans are available on the DPW webpage.



# Soil Health program encourages soil health adoption

NORTHAMPTON – American Farmland Trust, in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources and NOFA/Mass, announced a comprehensive soil health program, incentivizing farmers throughout Massachusetts to adopt regenerative agriculture practices with the goal of improving resilience to climate change and farm viability. The Massachusetts Coordinated Soil Health Program will focus on both organic and conventional farmers to better understand the current resources and practices being utilized. The program will encourage the implementation of cover crops, no-till, nutrient management, and other soil health management practices.

More than 54% of Massachusetts cropland is dedicated to hay or corn for silage (USDA). Meanwhile, vegetables are the second largest crop acreage in the state. Yet, both the vegetable and dairy industries’ established presence has not buffered the economic impact of declining milk prices and a log jammed supply chain for vegetables and dairy products. With improved production methods and soil health practices, Massachusetts farms can strengthen their financial standing and reduce the risk of climate change impacts, setting them up for greater stability and presence in our local food system.

There are many barriers to implementing comprehensive soil health practices for any type of farm operation, whether they be financial or technical. However, there is considerable interest from farmers who are not currently utilizing cover crops or reduced tillage in learning about the benefits, and how to integrate these practices into their operations. The Massachusetts Coordinated Soil Health Program seeks to provide financial assistance including no-cost soil health assessments, free technical assistance, and on-farm learning events to share information on no-till and cover crop benefits, to influence the likelihood of adopting these practices.

“AFT is thrilled to help establish a soil health program for the State of Massachusetts that can serve farmers and provide support in their soil health journeys. Better soil health means greater yields, more resilience to climate change impacts, such as extreme weather events, and increased pest pressure. Improved soil health means increased farm viability and land tenure for farmers across the Commonwealth.” Dr. Emily Cole, New England Deputy Director.

The program brings together a solid advisory team of farmers, soil health experts, and agency partners, all of whom provide knowledge and resources on how to best provide the farmers in the Commonwealth with the financial and technical assistance necessary to overcome the many identified barriers. UMass Amherst Stockbridge School of Agriculture will be supporting this work by conducting soil health analysis for farmers interested in understanding more about the state of their soil’s health.

“Soil health is a critical but also advanced

area of understanding for both farmers and scientists. Projects like this provide a unique opportunity to not just study the science of soil health, but to actually see how the science holds up on the farm. That’s what we do in the Stockbridge School - we put science to work.” Dr. Masoud Hashemi, Extension Professor, Stockbridge School of Agriculture.

“The organic movement is centered around healthy soils practices,” said NOFA/Mass Policy Director Marty Dagoberto. “We are excited to partner with AFT and MDAR in order to scale out these practices for the benefit of all farmers and our biosphere.”

“Healthy soil is not only a fundamental building block for all agricultural practices, but employing healthy soil practices also contributes to climate change mitigation,” said MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux. “MDAR is pleased to partner with AFT and NOFA to further advance healthy soil concepts that will support the Baker-Polito Administration’s environmental and climate goals, and benefit farmers’ bottom lines.” Goals of the project include:

- Identify the barriers to soil health practice adoption through farmer interviews and surveys, and input from service providers.
- Organize soil health focused events for farmers across the state. The first event in the series, “No-Till Tools for Small Scale Farmers” is put on by NOFA/Mass and will take place at Long Life Farm in Hopkinton on May 16. Register at [nofamass.org/events](https://nofamass.org/events). Attendance is limited for safety and a video recap will be posted on Youtube following the event. Establish two on-farm soil health demonstration projects to track soil health changes and economic impacts and to serve as real-life examples for other Massachusetts farmers.
- Establish a robust database cataloging soil health status across the Commonwealth across a wide variety of production systems, soil types, and farming practices, helping to inform locally relevant agricultural research.
- Provide farmers with no-cost soil health assessments and technical assistance.
- Share the lessons learned from farmers, soil health evaluations, and project outcomes to generate resources including videos, factsheets, soil health case studies and reports, providing valuable information about soil health, climate resilience, and the economic viability of Massachusetts farms.

Providing farmers with resources to build health soils is crucial in combating climate change and maintaining a robust food system in Massachusetts. To learn more about the project, visit <https://farmland.org/ma-soil-health-program/>

If you, or someone you know, is a farmer in Massachusetts interested in building resilient soil, please take this brief survey to help us gather information on your current soil health practices. Participants who respond before May 31 will be entered to win one of five \$50 gift cards. Survey can be found here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MASoilHealth>

## POLICE LOGS

### BELCHERTOWN POLICE

*Editor’s note: The following are brief explanations of select entries in the Belchertown Police log and arrests for the weeks of April 28 through May 5. The information was provided by a member of the police department based on the review of the detailed log summary. This feature is designed to provide context and explanation to some of the calls police respond to every day. Of the 335 calls police responded to, there were nine incidents, two accidents, six arrest/summons and eight citations.*

#### ARRESTS/SUMMONS

##### Friday, April 30

12:13 p.m. – A 43-year-old Belchertown was man arrested on a warrant.

##### Sunday, May 2

4:42 p.m. – A 24-year-old Belchertown woman was arrested on charges of assault and battery on a family and household member, witness intimidation and destruction of property. Officers responded to a report of two parties fighting in a vehicle.

4:42 p.m. – A 24-year-old Connecticut man from arrested for two counts of violation an abuse prevention order.

#### ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

##### Wednesday, April 28

2:58 p.m. – Officers responded to a Fuller St residence for report of a vehicle that was vandalized. The officers reported two tires were slashed. There were items that didn’t belong to residents that were found in the backyard. These items were taken into evidence. There are no suspects at this time.

##### Thursday, April 29

10:55 p.m. – An officer spoke with a resident about a compromising photo posed on social media. The officer recommended that the resident report to the social media site so the image could be taken down. A report of the incident was completed. Later in the evening officers responded to the area where the involved resident lived for a report of a disturbance.

##### Friday, April 30

5:24 p.m. – Officers responded to an accident at the Springfield Rd, South Main St and North Washington. The operator was traveling south on South Main St approaching the intersection of Springfield

Rd when a second vehicle pulled in front them on Springfield Rd. There was damage to the driver’s side rear bumper on the second vehicle and to the front the first vehicle. No injuries were reported and no tow was necessary.

11:27 p.m. – Officers responded to an accident on West St. The operator wad travelling east on West St when a deer crossed the road. The operator swerved to avoid the deer, crossing over the westbound lane, striking rock wall, spinning, striking in the rear of the vehicle and coming to rest in the westbound lane. There were no injuries and no tow was necessary.

##### Tuesday, May 4

3:56 p.m. – Officers took a report from someone who ordered items online and was awaiting shipment to their PO box but it was delivered to their residence instead. The caller reported they never received the items despite the delivery company’s report the item was delivered. An officer took a report of the incident.

9:14 p.m. – Officers responded with Belchertown fire and paramedics for a report of a teenager with suicidal thoughts.

### GRANBY POLICE

*Editor’s Note: The Granby Police Department responded to 137 calls for the week of April 30 through May 6. Those arrested are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. All information is provided by the Granby Police Department.*

##### Friday, April 30

4:26 p.m. – Officers took a report of identity theft. The incident is still under investigation.

7:44 p.m. – Paul Hughes, 56, of 7 Carver St, Granby was arrested on charges of operation under influence of alcohol.

##### Saturday, May 1

10:30 a.m. – Officers investigated a motor vehicle accident on Burnett St. The operator drove off roadway and stuck a utility pole. A citation was issued for distracted driving.

##### Wednesday, May 5

12:51 p.m. – Officers investigated a two-car accident on West State St and Pleasant St. No injuries were reported.

4:42 p.m. – Officers investigate motor vehicle accident on West State St. No injuries were reported.

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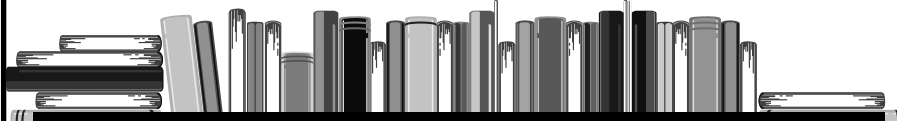
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RAIL • from page 1

senger rail to Palmer. We are well-positioned at the northeast corner of Metro Hartford-Springfield, closest to Worcester and Boston. The study recognizes the work we’ve done to prepare for restored passenger rail.”

Prepared by the international consulting firm AECOM, which specializes in infrastructure, the report not only celebrates modern mass transit as a tool for economic and social transformation but accuses state and federal governments of negligence over a lack of progress. Although it hails the 2018 opening of the Hartford-Springfield line as a step in the right direction, the service just scratches the surface, the consultant said, and even that new line needs improvement, according to the study.

“The work remaining to be done includes electrification, additional rolling stock, a replacement of the Connecticut River Bridge at Windsor Locks, double-tracking of key segments, five new or relocated stations, and upgrading the downtown Hartford rail viaduct. These improvements, estimated to cost up to \$3 billion, would boost speed, reliability, and access,” the study states.

The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission also had input on the report.

The East-West Rail project in Massachusetts would connect Springfield to Worcester and Boston, and potentially westward to Pittsfield.

“These services nominally exist today, but with only one train in each direction (Amtrak’s Lakeshore Limited), unreliable performance, and uncompetitively slow speeds—about an hour longer than driving in mid-day conditions. While several alternatives remain in play, an investment in the \$4 billion range would cut nearly an hour off the Springfield-Boston trip, enable at least 10 round trips per day, and provide comfort and reliability,” according to the report.

“In Boston, the train would stop not only at South Station, with its instant connections to the Red and Silver Lines and much of downtown accessible on foot, but at the key destinations of Back Bay, the Longwood Medical Area (Lansdowne Station), and the future multimodal hub at West Station. Together, the East-West Line and the completed Hartford Line would reconstitute a 21st-century version of the old Inland Route—regular train service from Boston to New York via Worcester, Springfield, Hartford, and New Haven—

*“Regions that are connected by rail to major economic hubs such as Boston and New York City are thriving, while under-served communities like ours have lagged behind. We now know what the lack of rail has cost us economically and this trend simply cannot continue.”*

**KIMBERLY H. ROBINSON**  
*Pioneer Valley Planning Commission  
Executive Director*

which the region has lacked for decades. It would create a regional network of great versatility and economic potential, combining intercity service all along the corridor with high-frequency, transit-like service in the Hartford-Springfield core.”

**An economic driver**

At a press conference last week at Springfield Union Station, U.S. Rep. Richard E. Neal and Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Executive Director Kimberly H. Robinson seized on the report as further evidence that a Biden administration infrastructure proposal should include more than \$1 billion for the East-West line. Biden’s infrastructure wish list is reportedly under negotiations among congressional leaders, but there’s been no date set for public hearings.

In the meantime, Neal, who pledged last fall to fight for the project, laid out at the press conference part of his argument on why Western Mass needs a new, expansive commuter rail.

“In the Hartford-Springfield area (there is) a population of 1.6 million people, regional gross domestic product of over \$20 billion, 20 colleges and universities, two historic downtowns and New England’s second-largest airport, in which I believe seven million people ventured through last year,” Neal said.

“This confirms what many of us have thought about what improved rail service could do for the Springfield-Hartford-Worcester-New Haven areas, in terms of not just geography, but in terms of investment as well.”

Robinson also considers the report validation.

“In so many ways the findings of this study confirmed what we ourselves have known here for decades,” Robinson said.

“Regions that are connected by rail to major economic hubs such as Boston and New York City are thriving, while under-served communities like ours have lagged behind. We now know what the lack of rail has cost us economically and this trend simply cannot continue.”

**Key findings**

According to the report, the “Metro Hartford-Springfield” region would rank among the 40 largest in the U.S. “Yet the Hartford-Springfield economy is isolated and lagging” because of gaps in the mass transit network. Filling those gaps, the report asserts, would transform the region. Its key findings include:

- Up to 40,000 jobs in information, finance, and professional services “which have fueled growth elsewhere in the Northeast” can be attracted over time to this region.
- Between New Haven and Worcester, the Inland Route rail improvements would serve 16 existing and future stations. Recent and planned development in these station areas suggests a strong market of interconnected residential communities, employment centers, and public destinations.
- Aggregate station area potential has capacity for about 20 million square feet of commercial development and 30,000 housing units.
- “Together, these two outcomes – the gradual attraction of 20,000-40,000 ‘missing’ professional service jobs and the construction of station-area development – account for an estimated \$47 to \$84 billion in directly-generated regional GDP over 30 years, including \$27 to \$48 billion in wages. An additional \$15 to \$21 billion of indirect and induced GDP is estimated as well,” according to the report.
- “If you can commute easily between Hartford and Springfield, or live in Windsor Locks and work in Worcester, or live in Holyoke and work in Hartford or New Haven; or if you can run a business in

Springfield and routinely make day trips to New York or Stamford or Boston; or if your business at Bradley International Airport can attract workers from Wallingford and Palmer—all by train, without the expense of car ownership or the future roadway congestion that will come with growth—that’s a competitive advantage for the region,” the report states.

**Boost for Palmer**

The town of Palmer, which would return to its roots as a commuter rail hub, figures prominently in the report.

“A historic industrial community known as ‘the Town of Seven Railroads,’ Palmer is still a rail crossroads, where the CSX and Central Vermont intersect in Depot Village. Both lines are busy freight carriers, and Amtrak’s Lakeshore Limited passes through (but does not stop) on the CSX track. Union Station, an H. H. Richardson original building, lives on as a restaurant and landmark,” the report says.

“While Depot Village is largely built out at the scale of a small town center, there is ample underutilized land available. Palmer’s Community Plan identifies Depot Village, as well as an expanse of undeveloped woodland along Route 32 just north of the village, as strategic development sites. Palmer’s location in the regional mobility network amplifies its potential from a commercial/ industrial as well as a residential standpoint. Depot Village adjoins the only Massachusetts Turnpike exit in a 24-mile stretch, and three regional highways—Routes 20, 32, and 181—intersect here. Palmer is the gateway to a 21-town area that includes the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Developable land is inexpensive.”

Echoing arguments local rail proponents have been making for years, the report seeks to hone the message that an East-West line benefits essentially everyone.

“Households, businesses, and governments are connected in a complex web of interdependent relationships based on producing, selling, purchasing, and taxing goods and services,” it says.

“An initial change in one of these creates ripple effects through the others. Initial impacts tend to create revenues at other firms and employment for residents and associated income, as well as tax revenues to state and local governments referred to as fiscal impacts.”

*Reporter Jonah Snowden contributed to this story.*



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# SPORTS

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Owen Sedlacek moves around toward the sideline.



Griffin Wise surveys the field, looking to make a throw.



Koy Monette advances toward the Comp goal.



Goalie Matt Pacheco makes a long toss out to a teammate.



Jaden Wise tries to get a shot around the Comp defense.

## Orioles comeback not enough against Colts

**TIM PETERSON**  
Sports Correspondent

CHICOPEE — The Chicopee Comp boys lacrosse team pretty much controlled the first 28 minutes of the season opening match versus Valley League rival Belchertown.

The Orioles, who trailed, 8-0, made a comeback in the middle of the third quarter slicing the deficit to 8-5.

The Colts regained the momentum during the fourth quarter by scoring five unanswered goals en route to a 13-5 victory before a large gathering at Mitchell Kuzdzal Field, last Thursday night. “We’re a very young and inex-

perienced team this year, but we had a lot of guys step up in tonight’s game,” said Comp head coach Matt Smith. “Winning our first game of the season should give us a lot more confidence.”

The Colts now have a 7-0 record against the Orioles since the start of the 2016 regular season.

“Belchertown is a well-coached team and they’ve always played well against us,” said Smith, who’s entering his fourth season as the Colts head coach. “They’re a league rival, so it’s a huge win for us.”

The Orioles swept the season series in 2015.

Just like every other high school boys’ lacrosse team in

Massachusetts, the Orioles and the Colts didn’t play any matches last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Both teams finished the 2019 regular season with 13-5 records.

Comp lost to Westfield in a first round match of the Central/Western Mass. Division 2 tournament.

Belchertown lost to Nipmuc in a first round match of the Central/Western Mass. Division 3 tournament.

Three of the Orioles seniors listed on this year’s roster are planning to play lacrosse at the collegiate level next year.

See **ORIOLES**, page 16 •



PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY [WWW.SWEETDOGPOTOS.COM](http://WWW.SWEETDOGPOTOS.COM)  
Shea Cunningham holds the ball for the Orioles.

### SOCCEER

## Pioneers return to action

**TIM PETERSON**  
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW — When Maxi Viera first joined the Western Mass. Pioneers back in 2012, he knew very little about the history of the club and about historic Lusitano Stadium.

Viera, who’s originally from Montevideo, Uruguay, is one of the Pioneers veteran players on this year’s team. He likes to tell the younger players how special it is to wear a Pioneers uniform and what it means to play home matches at the only soccer specific stadium in New England.

“Playing soccer matches at this stadium is very special because of the history,” Viera said. “It’s also very important for us to have a successful season every year because we’re representing both the club and this community.”

The Pioneers, who finished in first place in the Northeast Division standings with an 11-0-3 mark, qualified for the USL

League Two playoffs in 2019. They kicked off the 2021 campaign by posting a 3-0 shutout win over Fall River FC in a

friendly match held under the bright lights at Lusitano Stadium,

See **PIONEERS**, page 16 •



PHOTO BY DAVID HENRY [WWW.SWEETDOGPOTOS.COM](http://WWW.SWEETDOGPOTOS.COM)  
Maxi Viera makes a dodge to keep the ball from being taken away.

### AT THE RACES

## Kruczek picks up win at Star Speedway

WALPOLE, N.H. — Bryan Kruczek passed the entire field — at least twice — en route to his first career Granite State Pro Stock Series win at Star Speedway on Saturday, May 8. Kruczek, who was fastest in time trials and won his heat race, started seventh -- but had to go to the rear on at least two different occasions. The Bobby Webber Racing driver didn’t let that slow him down, as he took the Vynorius No. 19 into Victory Lane in the third GSPSS race of the season, the Hedges Excavating 100.

“I’m out of breath,” Kruczek said, climbing from the car. “I had to pass a lot of cars out there. I can’t thank all of my guys enough, my guys are second to none. Bobby Webber lets me come out here and tells me to hand him the steering wheel or

the trophy. We have some awesome sponsors.”

Angelo Belsito and Joey Pole started on the front row -- with Belisto taking the early advantage looking for his second straight win, and former series champion Devin O’Connell mounting an early charge to the lead with 33 laps complete. Pole took the lead on a restart with 58 laps to go, but couldn’t hold back the charges of Kruczek in the late laps.

Kruczek’s day included contact and a spin by Jacob Dore, which sent both to the rear, and contact and a spin with Evan Beaulieu, which sent both to the rear. He pitted multiple times to the attention of his Bobby Webber Racing crew, but the car was right at the end. He passed Pole for the top

See **RACES**, page 16 •

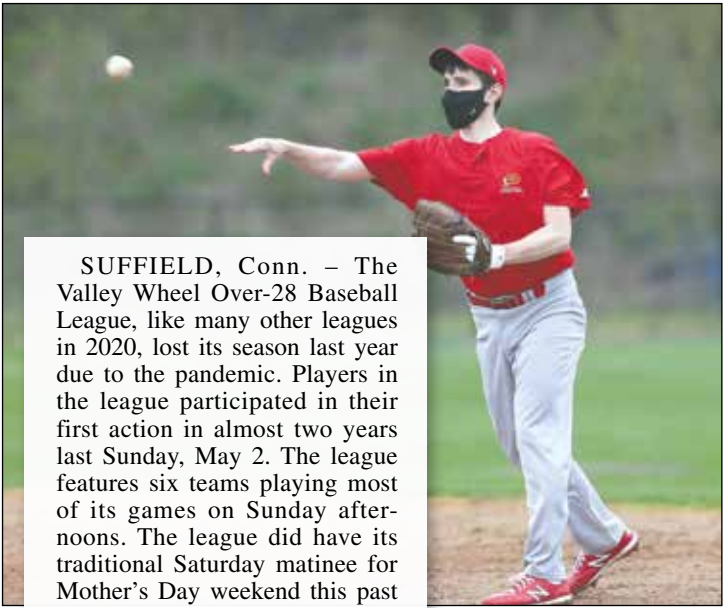


SPORTS

VALLEY WHEEL ACTION OPENS



Twins pitcher Dan Benoit fires to the plate.



SUFFIELD, Conn. – The Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League, like many other leagues in 2020, lost its season last year due to the pandemic. Players in the league participated in their first action in almost two years last Sunday, May 2. The league features six teams playing most of its games on Sunday afternoons. The league did have its traditional Saturday matinee for Mother’s Day weekend this past week.

Justin Morin makes a throw to first.



The Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League opened up play last week after the 2020 was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



Angels third baseman Mike Dean, of Wilbraham, fields a grounder.



Kevin Little, of Palmer, pitches in the opening game for the Angels at Suffield High School.

PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM

Premier Lacrosse League training camp to be held at Gillette

FOXBOROUGH – The Premier Lacrosse League (PLL) powered by Ticketmaster announced today it will be holding their 2021 Training Camp at Gillette Stadium from May 28 through June 3, 2021 leading up to their Week 1 matchups at Gillette Stadium.

“There’s not a venue as closely connected to lacrosse, with world-class facilities and amenities like Gillette Stadium and One Patriot Place,” says co-founder and CEO, Mike Rabil. “With our opening weekend of games slated for June 4th, our athletes will receive the best care while preparing for the start of the season on location.”

During this time, PLL players will take part in official team practices, scrimmages, preseason workouts, film sessions, and educational workshops with their coaches ahead of their regular season debuts. Training Camp will be closed to the public, but tickets are still available for Opening Weekend at Ticketmaster.com.

“We look forward to hosting the PLL’s Training Camp at Gillette Stadium for the first time this spring, in addition to hosting the league’s Opening Weekend,” said Kraft Group President-International Dan Kraft, who was a collegiate lacrosse goalie for Tufts University in the 1980s and served on the executive Board of the 2018 Federation of International Lacrosse’s World Championships Host Committee. “Hosting training

camp is another important step in our strong relationship with the PLL and we cannot wait to welcome the nation’s best lacrosse players, including former Patriot Chris Hogan, back to Gillette Stadium. While training camp will be closed to the public, we are excited to welcome fans to Gillette Stadium June 4 through June 6 to enjoy five riveting PLL matchups all weekend long.”

As part of PLL’s Training Camp, pre-season exhibition games will be hosted at Veterans Memorial Stadium on June 1. More information on schedule and tickets for pre-season exhibition games forthcoming.

The PLL season will begin at Gillette Stadium for the second time, getting underway with a primetime matchup between Cannons LC and Redwoods LC under the lights on Friday, June 4. Saturday’s slate includes a championship rematch between Whipsnakes LC and Chaos LC, followed by Archers LC taking on Atlas LC. On Sunday afternoon, Cannons LC will return to the field against Waterdogs LC, and the weekend will be capped off with a matchup between Chrome LC and Redwoods LC.

The entire 2021 PLL season will be viewable on the NBCU family of networks, with all games available to stream live and on-demand on Peacock. The 2021 season will feature more than half of its games on NBC and NBCSN, with a full broadcast schedule to be announced at a later date.

ORIOLES • from page 15

Cole Irving will be attending the University of New England. Owen Sedlacek is heading to Nazareth College, which is in Rochester, New York. Griffin Weiss will be playing at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky.

Nick St. George also replaced Patrick Nee, who retired following the 2019 season, as the Orioles head coach.

“The players are still getting used to my coaching style and I’m still getting to know them,” said St. George, who coached the Belchertown girls’ lacrosse team in 2019. “It’s a learning process for everybody and we just want to keep improving in every game.”

One of the Colts returning varsity players is junior Dylan Seymour, who scored four goals in the season opening victory.

“Dylan is one of our few returning players and he’s one of our leaders,” Smith said. “He started playing for us as a freshman. He set the tone at the start of the game.”

Seymour, who’s older brother, Brady, is the first-year boys’ lacrosse coach at Granby High School, scored three goals on his first four shot attempts of the match. He netted a pair of unassisted goals, which were sandwiched around another goal assisted by junior David Girouard, who also scored four goals in the first meeting of the regular season against Belchertown.

Two more goals by senior’s Jacob Girouard and Hunter Davis gave the home team a 5-0 advantage entering the second stanza.

David Girouard scored his first goal of the contest with 2:52

remaining in the opening half giving the Colts a 6-0 halftime advantage.

The Colts built an 8-0 lead four minutes into the third quarter following another goal by David Girouard, which was assisted by Seymour, and an unassisted goal by senior Brennan Fields.

With 7:26 left in the third quarter, the Orioles ended the shut-out hopes of Comp senior goalie Chase Presz (11 saves) with an unassisted goal by Sedlacek.

The Orioles comeback continued with two more unassisted goals by sophomore Brady Moreau and senior Jaden Wise.

“We did play a lot better in the third quarter,” St. George said. “We had a lot of momentum and cut the deficit down to 8-5. We also had several more scoring opportunities, but we just didn’t capitalize on them. They regained the momentum again in the fourth quarter.”

At that point, Smith decided to call a time-out.

“I was a little bit nervous when they started to comeback against us,” Smith said. “I just called a time-out and tried to settle things down a little bit.”

With less than two minutes remaining in the third quarter, Weiss delivered a pass to Wise, who scored his second goal making the score 8-4. Then Wise forced a turnover leading to another goal by Sedlacek.

The visitors couldn’t get any closer than three goals the rest of the way.

David Girouard scored two more goals during the final quarter. The Colts other three fourth quarter goals were by Seymour, Jacob Girouard, and junior Daniel Stefanik.



SUBMITTED PHOTO

Bryan Kruczek was the winner in the Granite State Pro Stock race last weekend.

RACES • from page 15

spot with 24 laps to go -- however, a caution late gave Pole on last chance.

Pole edged out for the lead on the restart, crossing the line out front at lap 94 -- but slight contact a few laps later sent him backwards, and eventually spinning down the frontstretch, ending his day early. Kruczek held off a final charge from Josh King over the final laps to seal the victory.

King was second, followed by Dore, Belsito and Derek Gluchacki. Tyler Tomassi was sixth, while Gabe Brown, Beaulieu, O’Connell and Kevin Casper finished the top-10.

The Granite State Pro Stock Series returns to the track on Sunday, May 30, as part of a Memorial Day weekend special at Claremont Motorsports Park. For more information on the Granite State Pro Stock Series, visit gspss.net and follow the series on social media.

- The Finish:
- Bryan Kruczek
  - Josh King
  - Jacob Dore
  - Angelo Belsito
  - Derek Gluchacki
  - Tyler Tomassi
  - Gabe Brown
  - Evan Beaulieu
  - Devin O’Connell
  - Kevin Casper
  - Bobby Cabral
  - Bill Helliwell
  - Joey Pole
  - Bobby Pelland
  - TJ Bleau
  - Mike Mitchell
  - Luke Hinkley



SPORTS

PIONEERS • from page 15

last Friday night.

“The good thing about tonight’s match is that I had the opportunity to watch 20 players play prior to our first regular season match,” said Pioneer’s head coach Federico Molinari. “We do have a bunch of returning players and a couple of newcomers. We just want to be a competitive team again this year.”

Because of the COVID-19 protocols, no spectators could attend last Friday’s friendly match. The 2020 soccer season was also canceled due to the pandemic.

“It was very strange not playing any matches for the Pioneers last year, especially following a very successful 2019 season,” Viera said. “We really want to perform well this season and make the playoffs again.”

What makes attending matches at Lusitano Stadium so special for the Pioneers faithful supporters is the atmosphere.

“It reminds me a lot of that soccer clubs that I played for back in Uruguay,” Viera added. “The soccer fans here have a lot of passion for the sport. It’s one of the reasons why we have so many international players on our team. When they come here and it feels like home to them, which is very special.”

The Pioneers were scheduled to open the regular season with a road match against the Boston Bolts on Tuesday night. They’re also slated to play another road match against FC Malaga City, who’s a new team in the Northeast Division on Saturday night before hosting the Seacoast United Phantoms in the home opener on May 21.

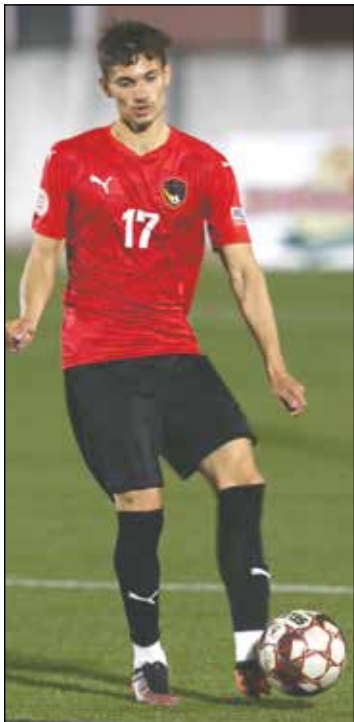
The Pioneers officials are hoping a few fans will be allowed to attend the first home match of the regular season.

For more information about how to purchase tickets online please visit [wmpioneers.com](http://wmpioneers.com).

Another returning player this season is Blake Mullen, who’s the Pioneers starting goalkeeper. He allowed a total of seven goals during the 2019 regular season.

“Whenever you start a soccer team, you normally begin at the back (goalkeeper) and work forward,” said Viera, who’s also the girls’ varsity soccer coach at Ludlow High School. “Blake had an amazing season for us two years ago. It gives you a lot of confidence having a talented goalie like him back there. We’re hoping he has another great season this year.”

Mullen, of Manchester, Conn.,



Chaney Nash Gibney gets the ball ready to fly.



Patrick Agymang dribbles toward the sideline.



Connor Hicks, of Monson, plays for the Pioneers last Friday night.



Gabriel Ganzer makes his way up the field

PHOTOS BY DAVID HENRY [WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM](http://WWW.SWEETDOGPHOTOS.COM)

played soccer at St. Joseph’s College in Maine. That’s where he first met Molinari.

“I was playing for a National Premiere Soccer League team in Maine and Federico found me,” Mullen said. “I tried out for the team and I was a backup goalie my first year playing here. It was a step up for me and I learned a lot that season. Federico is an outstanding coach. I’ve also learned a lot from Jon Voight, who’s our goalie coach.”

Mullen became the Pioneers

starter in 2019 and he was the USL League Two Golden Glove winner that season.

“It’s a very special award to me, but I couldn’t have done it without the help of my defense,” he said. “We had a great defense, and it was a special season for us.”

The Pioneers only returning defender is Federico Gutierrez.

Mullen has enjoyed playing home matches at Lusitano Stadium.

“It’s awesome when all of the

fans are here supporting us,” Mullen said. “It pushes us to play a little bit harder because whenever you do lose a game at this stadium, the fans are disappointed. The atmosphere is always great following a victory.”

Mullen was replaced by Robert Montanaro in the middle of the second half.

Another returning player is Connor Hicks, who lives in Monson.

“I was mainly a practice player in 2019, but I did get to play in a playoff game,” said Hicks, a member of the AIC men’s soccer team. “It was just an awesome experience for me.”

When Hicks was younger, he attended a lot of the Pioneers games at the stadium.

“I remember coming to the Pioneers games when they played on a grass field,” Hicks said. “It’s now a turf field, but it’s one of the best stadiums I’ve ever played soccer at. I really enjoy playing soccer for this team. I know that I’ll have to work very hard at practice to get some playing time this year.”

One of the Pioneers newcomers is Gabriel Ganzer, who is from Brazil and is living in Chicopee. He scored a goal and added an assist during the first half against Fall River.

Guillermo Deal, who’s a returning player, and newcomer Andrew Barrowman scored the Pioneers other two goals.

Valley Wheel Baseball seeks new players

REGION – The Valley Wheel Over-28 Baseball League is looking for new players for the 2021 season, which is set to begin at the end of April. Players who are 28-years-old prior to June 1 are eligible to play in the league this season, however, only those 30 by June 1 are eligible to pitch. The league includes six teams and there is a 15-game season that begins on Sunday, April 25. Games are 12 Sundays, a special Mother’s Day weekend Saturday game, and two weekday night games under the lights. The season ends the final week of July with the playoffs for the top four teams during the first two weeks of August. While tryouts have completed, there are still open roster spots among the six teams in the league. The league will continue to accept applications for new players throughout the season. All players bat and every player spends at least four innings in the field in a nine-inning game. The league will be playing with some minor modifications due to the COVID-19 pandemic to start. For more information, please contact League Commissioner Jim Nason at [wheel12@comcast.net](mailto:wheel12@comcast.net).

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PUBLIC NOTICES

**Belchertown Conservation Commission LEGAL NOTICE**

Pursuant to the authority of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 131, Section 40 (Wetlands Protection Act) and the Belchertown Wetland Bylaw, the Belchertown Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing virtually on **Monday, May 24, 2021 at 7:00 PM**. The purpose of this meeting is to review a **Notice of Intent for the proposed driveway on Parcel 29 Allen St near 402 Allen St. (Map 226 Parcel 29 & Map 107, Parcel 24)**. Anyone interested in this matter should attend remotely: <https://global.gotomeet->

[ing.com/install/273511213](https://global.gotomeet-ing.com/install/273511213)  
05/13/2021

**Belchertown Conservation Commission LEGAL NOTICE**

Pursuant to the authority of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 131, Section 40 (Wetlands Protection Act) and the Belchertown Wetland Bylaw, the Belchertown Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing virtually on **Monday, May 24, 2021 at 7:00 PM**. The purpose of this meeting is to review a **Request for Determination of Applicability for the proposed construction of a**

**single family home at Lot A Crestview Drive; Map 254, Parcel 15.14.** Anyone interested in this matter should attend remotely: <https://www.gotomeet.me/BelchertownConservation>  
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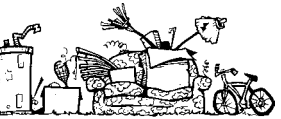
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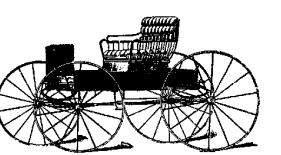
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